

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A lithium battery comprising:
a cathode;
an anode; and
a separator interposed between the cathode and the anode, wherein a protective film of lithium nitride having a thickness of 0.01 to 5 µm is formed on at least one surface of the separator, and wherein the separator bearing a protective film of lithium nitride is a polyethylene separator, a polypropylene separator, a polyethylene/polypropylene double-layered separator, a polyethylene/polypropylene/polyethylene triple-layered separator, a polypropylene/polyethylene/polypropylene triple-layered separator, glass fiber filter paper, or a ceramic separator.
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Currently Amended) The lithium battery of claim 1, wherein the protective film of lithium nitride has a thickness of ~~0.01 to 5~~ 0.1 to 1 µm.

5. (Previously Presented) The lithium battery of claim 1, wherein the protective film of lithium nitride is formed by gas reaction, thermal deposition, sputtering, chemical vapor deposition, plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition, laser enhanced chemical vapor deposition, ion plating, cathodic arc, jet vapor deposition or laser ablation.

6 to 11. (Cancelled).